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### Main Street Program Information

*Montana Preservation Alliance saves and protects Montana's historic places, traditional landscapes and cultural heritage.*

- Main Street is a program developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in the mid-1970s. It is a community-driven, comprehensive approach to revitalizing older, traditional business districts throughout the United States. It promotes 4 concepts -- Design, Economic Restructuring, Promotion, and Organization -- that together form a common-sense way to address the issues and problems that face traditional business districts.
- The Main Street program recently celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and now has statewide coordinators in 40 of the 50 states. Main Street's success lies in vigorous, grassroots supported by state coordinating programs that provide oversight and technical support. At the broad national level, the National Trust Main Street Center, guides the movement nationally and provides expertise and training. All of these organizations work together to create preservation-based commercial district revitalization.
- Over time, most Main Street programs achieve significant investment in the commercial district, including exponential growth in the number of businesses and jobs. At the 10 year mark, downtowns on average across the nation see tremendous improvement:
  - 12-13 times the numbers of dollars invested in the physical downtown environment
  - 13 times the number of new businesses
  - And most impressive: 100 times the cumulative net numbers of new jobs
- Montana's downtowns are the most visible indicator of community pride, economic and social health. The condition of small town commercial districts is either an asset or a liability in the effort to recruit new residents, new businesses and industries, retirees, tourists, and others to the community and to keep those already there. Quality of life is what separates successful cities and towns from declining communities in the new millennium.

- Since the 2005 Legislature passed a bill creating Main Street, the investment and return in small communities has been tremendous. There are now 15 Main Street programs across the state. We are providing statistics that demonstrate this success. See attached spreadsheets.